

AMENDMENT

Kindly amend the application as follows:

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend the claims, without prejudice, as follows:

1. (Currently Amended) A process for immobilizing nucleic acid molecules on a substrate, comprising the steps of:

a) treating said substrate ~~for about 0.1 to 10 minutes~~ with atomic oxygen plasma prior to immobilizing said nucleic acids; and

b) immobilizing said nucleic acid molecules on said treated substrate,

wherein said substrate is a single crystal surface or an amorphous surface.

2. (Previously Amended) The process according to claim 1, wherein the nucleic acid is selected from the group consisting of DNA, RNA, PNA, CNA, RNA, HNA, p-RNA, oligonucleotides, oligonucleotides of DNA, oligonucleotides of RNA, primers, A-DNA, B-DNA, Z-DNA, polynucleotides of DNA, polynucleotides of RNA, T-junctions of nucleic acids, domains of non-nucleic acid polymer-nucleic acid blockpolymers and combinations thereof.

3. (Previously Amended) The process according to claim 1, wherein the nucleic acid is double-stranded or single-stranded.

4. (Previously Amended) The process according to claim 1, wherein the nucleic acid is of natural character, modified, such as substituted with functional groups, non-modified or artificially generated.

5. (Currently Cancelled) ~~The process according to claim 1, wherein the substrate is a single crystal surface or an amorphous surface.~~

6. (Currently Amended) The process according to claim ~~5~~ 1, wherein said single crystal surface and said amorphous surface are selected from the group consisting of silicon oxides, glass, aluminum oxides, sapphire, perovskites, and derivatives and stabilized and/or doped derivatives thereof.

7. (Previously Amended) The process according to claim 1, wherein microwave generated oxygen plasma producing atomic oxygen from an oxygen gas or from a mixture of gases containing oxygen is used.

8. (Previously Amended) The process according to claim 1, wherein high-voltage generated and/or UV-light emitting source generated oxygen plasma producing atomic oxygen from an oxygen gas or from a mixture of gases containing oxygen is used.

9. (Previously cancelled) ~~Process according to claim 1, characterized in that the substrate is treated with atomic oxygen plasma for about 0.1 to 10 minutes.~~

10. (Previously Amended) The process according to claim 1, wherein the atomic oxygen plasma treatment is carried out using an oxygen pressure in the range of about 0.1 to 1.0 mbar.

11. (Previously Amended) The process according to claim 1, wherein the nucleic acid to be immobilized on the substrate is present in an aqueous solution.

12. (Previously Amended) The process according to claim 11, wherein the substrate is treated with said aqueous solution for about a few seconds to about 5 minutes.

13. (Previously Withdrawn as Not Elected)

14. (Previously Withdrawn as Not Elected)

15. (Not Amended) The process according to claim 6, wherein the perovskites are selected from the group consisting of SrTiO_3 , LaAlO_3 and ZrO_2 .

16. (Not Amended) The process according to claim 10, wherein the pressure range is from about 0.2 to 0.8 mbar.

17. (Not Amended) The process according to claim 12, wherein the substrate is treated with said aqueous solution for about 1 to 2 minutes.

18. (Currently Added) The process according to claim 1, wherein the substrate is treated with atomic oxygen plasma for about 0.1 to 10 minutes.